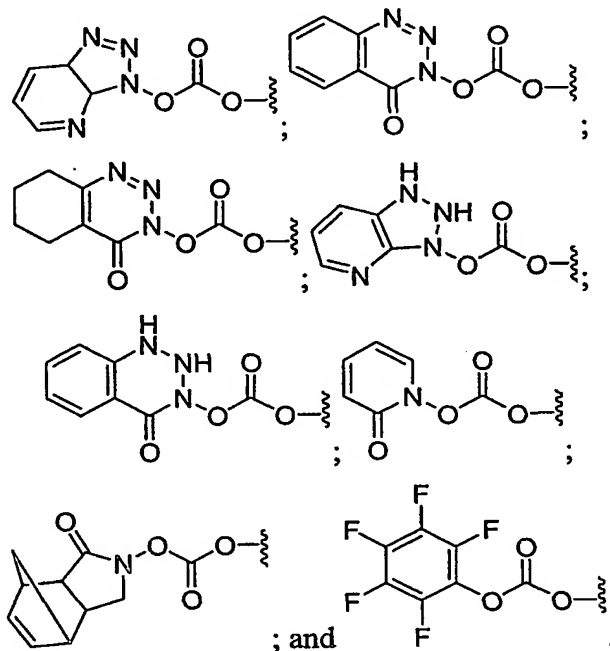


WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An activated water-soluble polymer, comprising a water-soluble polymer covalently attached to an activated leaving group wherein the water-soluble polymer is a member selected from PEG, PPG, PEG derivatives, and PPG derivatives, and the activated leaving group is a member selected from:



2. The activated water-soluble polymer of claim 1, wherein the water-soluble polymer is PEG-OCH₃.